

THE Spiritual Magazine.

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NOTES OF AN INQUIRY INTO THE PHENOMENA CALLED SPIRITUAL, DURING THE YEARS 1870-3.

THIS is the title of an article in the current number of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, by its editor, William Crookes, F.R.S. Those who imagine that the phenomena to which these four years of careful inquiry refer, is to be settled off-hand by some half-dozen random sittings at odd times with different mediums, and without any knowledge—perhaps in flagrant violation of the conditions on which these phenomena depend—may take a useful lesson from a Fellow of the Royal Society, who has given so much time to their truly scientific investigation. He tells us:—

“The subject is far more difficult and extensive than it appears. Four years ago I intended only to devote a leisure month or two, to ascertain whether certain marvellous occurrences I had heard about would stand the test of close scrutiny. Having, however, soon arrived at the same conclusion as, I may say, every impartial enquirer, that there was ‘something in it,’ I could not, as a student of nature’s laws, refuse to follow the enquiry wheresoever the facts might lead. Thus a few months have grown into a few years, and were my time at my own disposal it would probably extend still longer.”

The principal object of the writer and the conditions under which the facts recorded by him were witnessed are thus referred to:—

“My principal object will be to place on record a series of actual occurrences which have taken place in my own house, in the presence of trustworthy witnesses, and under as strict test conditions as I could devise. Every fact which I have observed is, moreover, corroborated by the records of indepen-

dent observers at other times and places. It will be seen that the facts are of the most astounding character, and seem utterly irreconcilable with all known theories of modern science. Having satisfied myself of their *truth*, it would be moral cowardice to withhold my testimony because my previous publications were ridiculed by critics and others who knew nothing whatever of the subject, and who were too prejudiced to see and judge for themselves whether or not there was truth in the phenomena; I shall state simply what I have seen and proved by repeated experiment and test, and 'I have yet to learn that it is irrational to endeavour to discover the causes of unexplained phenomena.' "

In his previous papers Mr. Crookes did not go beyond the assertion of those of "the phenomena called spiritual," which he had been able to demonstrate by mechanical tests; in this paper he attests the whole range of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, as witnessed by himself and others under the strictest test conditions.

At the commencement, he corrects one or two errors which have taken firm possession of the public mind; one is that darkness is essential to the phenomena, another he mentions is that the occurrences can be witnessed only at certain times and places, in the rooms of the mediums, or at hours previously arranged. Those he narrates took place in his own rooms, and except where darkness has been a necessary condition, as with some of the phenomena of luminous appearances, and in a few other instances, everything recorded has taken place in the light. In those few cases he has been very particular to mention the fact, and in those instances all the results have been produced under such perfect test conditions that the suppression of one of the senses has not really weakened the evidence. In reference to the analogy supposed to subsist between the phenomena called spiritual and the feats of legerdemain by professional conjurors and wizards, exhibited on their own platforms, and surrounded by all the appliances of their art, he remarks:—

"To show how far this is from the truth, I need only say that, with very few exceptions, the many hundreds of facts I am prepared to attest,—facts which to imitate by known mechanical or physical means would baffle the skill of a Houdin, a Bosco, or an Anderson, backed with all the resources of elaborate machinery and the practice of years,—have all taken place in my own house, at times appointed by myself, and under circumstances which absolutely precluded the employment of the very simplest instrumental aids."

Mr. Crookes proceeds to classify some of the phenomena

which have come under his notice, proceeding from the simple to the more complex, and briefly giving under each heading examples of some of the evidence he is prepared to bring forward.

CLASSIFICATION OF PHENOMENA.

- 1.—The movement of heavy bodies with contact, but without mechanical exertion.
- 2.—The phenomena of percussive and other allied sounds.
- 3.—The alteration of weight of bodies.
- 4.—Movements of heavy substances when at a distance from the medium.
- 5.—The rising of chairs and tables off the ground, without contact with any person.
- 6.—Levitation of human beings.
- 7.—Movements of various small articles without contact with any person.
- 8.—Luminous appearances.
- 9.—The appearance of hands, either self-luminous, or visible by ordinary light.
- 10.—Direct writing.
- 11.—Phantom forms and faces.
- 12.—Special instances that seem to point to the agency of an external intelligence.
- 13.—Miscellaneous occurrences of a complex character.

Mr. Crookes gives instances of each class of the phenomena enumerated, with their attendant circumstances. He says:—

“I have had several repetitions of the experiment considered by the Committee of the Dialectical Society to be conclusive, *viz.*, the movement of a heavy table in full light, the chairs turned with their backs to the table, about a foot off, and each person kneeling on his chair, with hands resting over the backs of the chair, but not touching the table. On one occasion this took place when I was moving about so as to see how everyone was placed.”

Most of the phenomena witnessed were through the mediumship of Mr. D. D. Home and Miss Kate Fox (now Mrs. Jencken). It is instructive to compare Mr. Crookes' testimony with that of other witnesses to like occurrences through these mediums, as for instance, the testimony of Mr. Robert Dale Owen to the varied circumstances under which the percussion sounds were heard by him in the presence of Miss Fox; and with regard to Mr. Home and his levitations, Mr. Crookes, after relating facts of the kind witnessed by him, says:—

“There are at least a hundred recorded instances of Mr.

Home's rising from the ground, in the presence of as many separate persons, and I have heard from the lips of the three witnesses to the most striking occurrence of this kind—the Earl of Dunraven, Lord Lindsay, and Captain C. Wynne—their own most minute accounts of what took place. To reject the recorded evidence on this subject is to reject all human testimony whatever; for no fact in sacred or profane history is supported by a stronger array of proofs.

“The accumulated testimony establishing Mr. Home's levitations is overwhelming. It is greatly to be desired that some person, whose evidence would be accepted as conclusive by the scientific world—if indeed there lives a person whose testimony *in favour* of such phenomena would be taken—would seriously and patiently examine these alleged facts. Most of the eye-witnesses to these levitations are now living, and would, doubtless, be willing to give their evidence. But, in a few years, such *direct* evidence will be difficult, if not impossible, to be obtained.”

There is one circumstance mentioned by Mr. Crookes, as attending these phenomena, to which the attention of scientific investigators might usefully be drawn. He says:—

“These movements (and indeed I may say the same of every kind of phenomena) are generally preceded by a peculiar cold air, sometimes amounting to a decided wind. I have had sheets of paper blown about by it, and a thermometer lowered several degrees. On some occasions, which I will subsequently give more in detail, I have not detected any actual movement of the air, but the cold has been so intense that I could only compare it to that felt when the hand has been within a few inches of frozen mercury.”

Most of the phenomena attested by Mr. Crookes are of a kind with which our readers are already quite familiar. Those which are perhaps the least so are those of luminous phenomena; and which we therefore quote entire.

LUMINOUS APPEARANCES.

“These, being rather faint, generally require the room to be darkened. I need scarcely remind my readers again that, under these circumstances, I have taken proper precautions to avoid being imposed upon by phosphorised oil or other means. Moreover, many of these lights are such as I have tried to imitate artificially, but cannot.

“Under the strictest test conditions, I have seen a solid self-luminous body, the size and nearly the shape of a turkey's egg, float noiselessly about the room, at one time higher than any one present could reach standing on tiptoe, and then gently

descend to the floor. It was visible for more than ten minutes, and before it faded away, it struck the table three times with a sound like that of a hard, solid body. During this time the medium was lying back, apparently insensible, in an easy chair.

"I have seen luminous points of light darting about and settling on the heads of different persons; I have had questions answered by the flashing of a bright light a desired number of times in front of my face. I have seen sparks of light rising from the table to the ceiling, and again falling upon the table, striking it with an audible sound. I have had an alphabetic communication given by luminous flashes occurring before me in the air, whilst my hand was moving about amongst them. I have seen a luminous cloud floating upwards to a picture. Under the strictest test conditions, I have more than once had a solid, self-luminous, crystalline body placed in my hand by a hand which did not belong to any person in the room. *In the light*, I have seen a luminous cloud hover over a heliotrope on a side table, break a sprig off, and carry the sprig to a lady; and on some occasions I have seen a similar luminous cloud visibly condense to the form of a hand and carry small objects about."

But the most important section of this valuable contribution to the scientific aspect of Spiritualism, is that bearing directly on the intelligence which governs the phenomena, which we quote *in extenso*.

SPECIAL INSTANCES WHICH SEEM TO POINT TO THE AGENCY OF AN EXTERIOR INTELLIGENCE.

"It has already been shown that the phenomena are governed by an intelligence. It becomes a question of importance as to the source of that intelligence. Is it the intelligence of the medium, of any of the other persons in the room, or is it an exterior intelligence? Without wishing at present to speak positively on this point, I may say that whilst I have observed many circumstances which appear to show that the will and intelligence of the medium have much to do with the phenomena,* I have observed some circumstances which seem conclusively to point to the agency of an outside intelligence, not belonging to any human being in the room. Space does not allow me to give here all the arguments which can be adduced to prove these points, but I will briefly mention one or two circumstances out of many.

* "I do not wish my meaning to be misunderstood. What I mean is, *not* that the medium's will and intelligence are actively employed in any conscious or dishonest way in the production of the phenomena, but that they sometimes appear to act in an unconscious manner."

"I have been present when several phenomena were going on at the same time, some being unknown to the medium. I have been with Miss Fox when she has been writing a message automatically to one person present, whilst a message to another person on another subject was being given alphabetically by means of 'raps,' and the whole time she was conversing freely with a third person on a subject totally different from either. Perhaps a more striking instance is the following:—

"During a *séance* with Mr. Home, a small lath, which I have before mentioned, moved across the table to me, in the light, and delivered a message to me by tapping my hand; I repeating the alphabet, and the lath tapping me at the right letter. The other end of the lath was resting on the table, some distance from Mr. Home's hands.

"The taps were so sharp and clear, and the lath was evidently so well under control of the invisible power which was governing its movements, that I said, 'Can the intelligence governing the motion of this lath change the character of the movements, and give me a telegraphic message through the Morse alphabet by taps on my hand?' (I have every reason to believe that the Morse code was quite unknown to any other person present, and it was only imperfectly known to me). Immediately I said this, the character of the taps changed, and the message was continued in the way I had requested. The letters were given too rapidly for me to do more than catch a word here and there, and consequently I lost the message; but I heard sufficient to convince me that there was a good Morse operator at the other end of the line, wherever that might be.

"Another instance. A lady was writing automatically by means of the planchette. I was trying to devise a means of proving that what she wrote was not due to 'unconscious cerebration.' The planchette, as it always does, insisted that, although it was moved by the hand and arm of the lady, the *intelligence* was that of an invisible being who was playing on her brain as on a musical instrument, and thus moving her muscles. I therefore said to this intelligence, 'Can you see the contents of this room?' 'Yes,' wrote the planchette. 'Can you see to read this newspaper?' said I, putting my finger on a copy of the *Times*, which was on a table behind me, but without looking at it. 'Yes,' was the reply of the planchette. 'Well,' I said, 'if you can see that, write the word which is now covered by my finger, and I will believe you.' The planchette commenced to move. Slowly and with great difficulty, the word 'however' was written. I turned round and saw that the word 'however' was covered by the tip of my finger.

"I had purposely avoided looking at the newspaper when I tried this experiment, and it was impossible for the lady, had she tried, to have seen any of the printed words, for she was sitting at one table, and the paper was on another table behind, my body intervening."

Mr. Crookes enumerates the following—

THEORIES TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PHENOMENA OBSERVED.

1.—The phenomena are all the results of tricks, clever mechanical arrangements, or legerdemain; mediums are impostors, and the rest of the company fools.

2.—The persons at a *séance* are the victims of a sort of mania or delusion, and imagine phenomena to occur which have no real objective existence.

3.—The whole is the result of conscious or unconscious cerebral action.

4.—The result of the spirit of the medium, perhaps in association with the spirits of some or all of the people present.

5.—The actions of evil spirits, or devils, personifying who or what they please, in order to undermine Christianity, and ruin men's souls.

6.—The actions of a separate order of beings, living on this earth, but invisible and immaterial to us; able, however, occasionally to manifest their presence; known in almost all countries and ages as demons (not necessarily bad), gnomes, fairies, kobolds, elves, goblins, Puck, &c.

7.—The actions of departed human beings—the spiritual theory *par excellence*.

8.—The Psychic Force theory. This (says Mr. Crookes) is a necessary adjunct to the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th theories, rather than a theory by itself.

Mr. Crookes summarily dismisses the first theory with "It is obvious that this theory can only account for a very small portion of the facts observed." Of the second and third theories, he remarks, "These two theories are evidently incapable of embracing more than a small portion of the phenomena, and they are improbable explanations for even those." On the remaining theories (spiritual theories) he makes no comment, nor in this place shall we, satisfied that if the facts given by Mr. Crookes are allowed due weight and consideration, they will carry with them the only theory adequate to explain them all.

The article has been issued in a separate form, but as it has no price, and no publisher's name on it, it is, we presume, for private circulation only. If so, it is to be regretted, as it should receive a far wider circulation than it is thus likely to attain.

Mr. Crookes has in his Notes given only an outline of his labours in this inquiry. The reader will be glad to learn that he announces a forthcoming volume, in which this outline will be filled up, and such a wealth of facts, such an abundance of evidence, so overwhelming a mass of testimony, all of which, marshalled in order, will be given as will, we are sure, render it in some respects the most valuable contribution yet made to the literature of Spiritualism.

SPIRITUALISM IN BIOGRAPHY AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

By THOMAS BREVIER.

GEORGE HERBERT quaintly sings—

Man is one world, and hath
Another to attend him.

History, ancient and modern, the poetry of all nations, the records of travellers, literature in every department—but especially in biography—illustrate this truth. The most cursory reader, if his attention is once drawn to the subject, cannot fail to be struck with the frequent recurrence of spiritual incidents of the most varied kind, and illustrating nearly every phase of the phenomena with which we are now getting so familiar under the name of Modern Spiritualism. They are, for the most part, embedded in narratives of a very different kind, and only incidentally related, as something curious, but with no distinct purpose or perception of their import—especially when correlated with other facts of like significance. Sometimes they are introduced with an air of apology, out of deference to our nineteenth century wisdom—and often, no doubt, such facts are suppressed altogether from regard to the same high authority. We think that Spiritualists should be able to fortify and illustrate their position, not only from their own experience and the experience of the spirit circle—though these are amply sufficient to prove their case—but also by reference to experiences altogether outside and independent, and spread over the whole field of literature—showing that they belong, not to a time or sect, but to humanity. We therefore add a few examples to the many already given in this Magazine.

Among the unevoked phenomena which seem to indicate spiritual intervention are those of dreams, presentiment, and spiritual vision; we will cite illustrations of each.

PROPHETIC DREAM REGARDING THE ASSASSINATION OF THE
RIGHT HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL.

In the *Life and Correspondence of the Right Hon. Spencer Perceval*, just published by his grandson, Spencer Walpole, we find the following highly interesting account of a dream :—

“The Speaker tells us on the authority of the late Lord Rokeby, that Perceval had strong apprehensions of his impending fate for several days before it took place, and that he had given his will to Mrs. Perceval, with some expressions indicating its probability. . The singular dream of Mr. John Williams, the grandfather of the present baronet, Sir F. Williams, has often been narrated. The subjoined account of it is taken from an attested statement drawn up and signed by Mr. Williams, in the presence of the Rev. Thomas Fisher and Mr. Charles Prideaux Brune. It was given by the latter of these gentlemen to the author of these Memoirs.

“Some account of a dream which occurred to John Williams, of Scorier House, in the county of Cornwall, in the year 1812, taken from his own mouth and narrated by him at various times to several of his friends.

“Being desirous to write out the particulars of a dream which I had in the year 1812, before I do so, I think it may be proper for me to say that at that time my attention was fully occupied with affairs of my own, the superintendence of some very extensive mines in Cornwall being entrusted to me. Thus I had no leisure to pay any attention to political matters, and hardly knew at that time who formed the administration of the country. . . . My dream was as follows :—

“About the 2nd or 3rd of May, 1812, I dreamed I was in the lobby of the House of Commons, a place well known to me. A small man, dressed in a blue coat and white waistcoat entered, and immediately I saw a person, whom I had observed on my first entrance, dressed in a snuff-coloured coat and yellow metal buttons, take a pistol from under his coat and present it at the little man above mentioned. The pistol was discharged, and the ball entered under the left breast of the person at whom it was directed. I saw the blood issue from the place where the ball had struck him; his countenance instantly altered, and he fell to the ground. Upon inquiry who the sufferer might be, I was informed that he was the Chancellor. I understood him to be Mr. Perceval, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer. I further saw the murderer laid hold of by several of the gentlemen in the room. Upon waking, I told the particulars related above to my wife. She treated the matter lightly, and desired

me to go to sleep, saying it was only a dream. I soon fell asleep again, and again the dream presented itself with precisely the same circumstances. After awaking a second time and stating the matter again to my wife, she only repeated her request that I would compose myself, and dismiss the subject from my mind. Upon my falling asleep the third time, the same dream, without any alteration was repeated; and I awoke as upon the former occasion, in great agitation. So much alarmed and impressed was I by the circumstance above narrated, that I felt much doubt whether it was not my duty to take a journey to London, and communicate upon the subject with the party principally concerned. Upon this point I consulted some friends, whom I met on business at the Godolphin mine, on the day following. . . . They dissuaded me from my purpose, saying that I might expose myself to contempt or vexation, or be taken up as a fanatic. Upon this I said no more, but anxiously watched the newspapers every evening as the post arrived. On the evening of the 13th of May, as far as I recollect, no account of Mr. Perceval's death was in the newspaper; but my second son, at that time returning from Truro, came in a hurried manner into the room where I was sitting, and exclaimed, "Father, your dream has come true. Mr. Perceval has been shot in the lobby of the House of Commons! There is an account come from London to Truro, written after the newspapers were printed." The fact was, Mr. Perceval was assassinated on the evening of the 11th.

"Some business soon afterwards called me to London, and in one of the print shops I saw a drawing for sale, representing the place and the circumstances which attended Mr. Perceval's death. I purchased it, and upon careful examination I found it to coincide in all particulars with the scene which had passed through my imagination in my dream. The colours of the dresses, the buttons of the assassin's coat, the white waistcoat of Mr. Perceval, the spot of blood upon it, and the countenance and the attitude of the parties present, were exactly what I had dreamed. The singularity of the case when mentioned among my acquaintance, naturally made it the subject of conversation in London, and in consequence my friend, the late Mr. Rennie, was requested by some of the Commissioners of the Navy that they might be permitted to hear the circumstances from myself. Two of them accordingly met me at Mr. Rennie's house, and to them I detailed at the time the particulars, then fresh in my memory, which form the subject of the above. I forbear to make any further comment upon the above narrative, further than to declare solemnly that it is a faithful account of facts as they actually occurred."

SAMUEL JOSEPH MAY.

In the partial Autobiography and Memoir of that indefatigable worker for humanity, the Rev. Samuel Joseph May, published by Roberts, Brothers, in Boston, United States, last year, mention is made of the strong religious impression made upon his mind, when a child, by the sudden death of his little brother, two years older than himself. This event took place when Samuel was four years and a half old. The two brothers were fondly attached to each other, and when Samuel at his urgent request was left alone with the dead body of his little playmate, and found that nothing he could say would arouse his brother, he was inconsolable. His parents and brothers and sisters tried to assuage his grief by telling him that Edward was still living—that he had become an angel, and had gone to heaven to dwell with the good and happy; but the little Samuel would not be comforted. He could not bear to be removed from the room where the little body lay, and twice he was found sleeping there and had to be carried to his own bed.

He says, "On the night after the funeral sleep soon came to relieve my young spirit, wearied with grief and strange excitement. And I dreamt of Edward. All that had been told me was proved true by what I saw and felt. The ceiling of the room opened, over where I was lying; a bright, glorious light burst in, and from the midst of it came down my lost brother, attended by a troop of little angels. They left him. He lay by me, as he used to do, his head on my arm, or my head on his. He told me how happy he was—what a beautiful place heaven was—how kind God and Christ were to him—and how all the angels loved one another. There he lay until morning, when the ceiling again opened, and the troop of angels came to bear him back to heaven. He kissed me, sent messages of love to father, mother, brother and sisters, and gladly rejoined the celestial company. So soon as I awoke, and was dressed, I hurried down to tell the family what I had seen, and to give them the kisses and messages that Edward sent them. All day long I thought and talked of what I had seen; often, as I have since been told, expressed impatience to have night come, and when it came, went eagerly to bed, in the confident expectation that the heavenly vision would be granted me again. And it was. The next night, and for several nights afterwards, I enjoyed the felt presence of my brother, and morning after morning, came down with the same or slightly varied messages of love, until by degrees my grief abated, the loss of my brother was in some measure supplied by other playmates, new things attracted my attention

and occupied my thoughts. But I have never forgotten my Edward and the events of his death and burial; and the scenes that I witnessed and the heavenly visions that I had are vivid in my memory, although most of my life, for several years afterwards, is indistinct. I have been most particular in narrating this part of my life, because I believe it had the greatest influence in awakening and fixing in my soul the full faith I have in the continuance of life after death. Indeed it sometimes seems to me that I do not believe more fully in the life that now is than in the life that is to come. And, moreover, that the future existence commences immediately after the close of the present."

PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

In the first volume of the *Memoirs of Percival Stockdale*, published in 1809, are some passages which it may be here interesting to record:—

"Soon after my arrival at Tillmouth, in May, 1748, a remarkable vision of the night was presented to my father, (and I doubt not) immediately from heaven. I am anticipating the sneer, both of the learned, and philosophical, and of the superficial and ignorant sceptic. However, I am convinced, with Homer, that dreams, sometimes descend from Jove. The far greater number of stories which I have heard of dreams, and apparitions, I instantaneously reject: *some* accounts of each have had such respectable attestations, and have been dignified with such a predictive, moral, and religious force, that if I had persisted in not believing them, I should have thought myself an obstinate and incorrigible ass. This credibility, in some cases, while my mind admits, I press it to my heart. It is one evidence more of an invisible spiritual, immortal, and eternal world. It soothes the pains, it exalts the pleasures of my soul: it disencumbers me from the rubbish, from all the evils of life;—even while I am lingering on earth, it unites me to my God. Weak and foolish people imagine that to be hard of belief, and to laugh at what they should revere, are proofs of the vigour and acuteness of their understanding. This is a very compendious way to good sense and knowledge; for it does not cost a shadow of argument, an atom of thought. . . .

"Our servant was the daughter of a deceased clergyman; she was a good young woman; and was, in every respect, warmly attached to our interest, therefore she was, in many instances, treated by us as an humble friend. For my father and mother she had the greatest affection and veneration. One of my father's dearest friends in his early and maturer years

was a Mr. Townson, a clergyman of excellent parts and a fine scholar. My father often, with the sacred tear of friendship in his eye, gave me particular accounts of this gentleman; of his graceful mien and person; of the generosity of his heart; of the enlargement of his mind; and of their attachment to each other, by the ties of literature and study as well as of friendship. One morning, early in the summer of 1748, while my mother and I were walking in the garden, my father called the servant whom I have mentioned to his bed-side; for he had not yet risen. He desired her attentively to observe, and remember what he was going to communicate to her.—He had dreamed (he told her), in a very striking and impressive manner, that his long-departed friend, Mr. Townson, came into his apartment, and conversed with him. His aspect and gesture (he said) had something inexpressibly august yet attractive; and his voice, and his eloquence, which were always elegant and forcible, were modulated, and inspirited with heavenly charms. He assured him of the eternal felicity of the just—incommunicable to mortal ear, because inconceivable to mortal mind; which felicity he should enjoy for ever with his old friend; and on which he was to enter within seven years. My father likewise expressed his perfect certainty of his death, at the time which was appointed for it in his dream. Accordingly, he died on the 7th of April, 1755. The servant, as he had desired, did not communicate the dream to my mother and me till after the sorrowful event. In his seven last years, he had some alarming indispositions; but on those occasions he always encouraged my mother, and almost assured her that he would recover: but in the illness which removed him to a better world, yet with a gentle transition, and on *his* part with a true Christian fortitude and serenity, he never gave her the least hopes of his recovery. . .

“From my veneration of the memory of one of the best of parents and of men, and from my regard for religion, I cannot omit here to relate a phenomenon which appeared in the death-bed of my father, on a night or two before he died. They who lead a sober life, and exercise impartial and close thinking, would be unworthy of their good habits, if they were not well prepared to meet the contempt, and the sneer of the superficial, the thoughtless, and the profligate. If we reject any particular fact, on account of its altogether unexampled novelty, I reply, that such facts are frequently rising in the moral and physical world; and even from *that* remoter and finer world, which occasionally reminds us of its reality. If we reject any object, because we cannot comprehend how it existed, we may spurn our belief of the whole creation. If we deny the possibility of any communication between visible and invisible beings; we

may as reasonably deny the existence of a God; we may as well adopt the impious and ridiculous nonsense of atheism.

"My father and mother were visited, in his last illness, by Mrs. Christian Spody, the housekeeper of old Mr. Wood, of Presson, in our neighbourhood—a gentleman, who had for many years been my father's friend. Her friendship for my mother, and her veneration of my father were warm and extraordinary. As she was certain that he was dying, she was determined to stay by him, and to see the end. This gentlewoman was a person of great integrity; she was endowed with good sense, and with a remarkable presence and firmness of mind. Late one evening she was sitting alone in the room where my father lay. My mother, fatigued with her affectionate vigils, had retired to rest. The fire was low, and without any flame. The window-shutters were close, and there was no moon. This darkness was partly the effect of design; that there might be as little cause as possible of interrupting his sleep. Mrs. Spody arose gently and went to the foot of the bed; rather to *hear* than to *see* if he was composed. I must observe that he lay in a press bed; the folding doors of which were open, but close to each side of the bed, from top to bottom. One of these doors stood out from that part of the wall which was close to the fireplace: consequently it intercepted every kind of communication between the fireplace and the interior parts of the bed; but, as I have already said, a mere glow was the only dim light which the fire afforded. If there was a candle in the room, it was kept remote; it was so placed that its light had no access to the bed, lest it should disturb his rest. She heard by his breathing that he was in a soft and placid sleep: but she was struck with an astonishing sight—with a pure and luminous glory at the head of his bed; it shone steadily, and she surveyed it intently for several minutes, undoubtedly with surprise; but, as she often declared to me, without any fear. On the contrary, she assured me that she felt in her mind a delightful perception; a soft but inexpressible rapture of enjoyment, something like the fruition of heaven before her time. After having surveyed this unaccountable lustre for awhile, she calmly examined every part of the room, to see if such unusual light could from any quarter be admitted. She was convinced of the impossibility of the supposition; returned and viewed it again. After she had beheld it uninterruptedly the second time for about five minutes, in a moment it disappeared, and was succeeded by the darkness with which the head of the bed had been before shaded. I often minutely examined Mrs. Spody on this most interesting subject, and she was always consistent and uniform in her answers. . . .

"I must mention another fact which attended my dearest

father's death, and which may probably excite the ridicule of the inconsiderate and licentious, but I hope that it may deserve the belief, and be the cause of the serious and salutary reflections of thinking and good men.

"But a very short time before his last illness he was dining in our parlour at Cornhill. The servant-maid was standing by him; the same person to whom he communicated the dream which he had at Tillmouth seven years before, and in which his old friend, Mr. Townson, predicted to him that in that time he should be with *him* in an eternal and happy state. She was standing very near to the parlour window, which was on her right hand. The form of my father, distinctly and fully presenting itself, and exactly in the dress which he sat at dinner, passed that window, in the way which led to the garden. It looked at the maid gravely and steadily as it slowly passed the window. She was naturally much alarmed at this awful sight, and grew pale and trembled; my father observed these very visible marks of fear, and asked her the cause of her discomposure; she pretended a sudden indisposition, and he made no farther enquiries. From her meditating and melancholy view of past and present omens, which to *her* feelings amounted to demonstrations, she was now assured that my father would soon die. This very solemn and affecting scene dwelt powerfully on her mind; she frequently repeated it to me, with all its circumstances, and with a positive and unshaken certainty of its reality.

"It was unusually long since I had received a letter from Cornhill, yet I had entertained no apprehensions of my father's illness. About the time of his decease, however, I had reason to fear its reality. On the night of the 6th of April I dreamed that I saw him, meagre and pale, sitting in his easy chair, with a blanket thrown round him, and on the succeeding night (on the 7th) I dreamed that he died. These objects I saw in a strong and striking vision, and they impressed me with an indubitable certainty of his death. A short time after a young gentleman of my acquaintance came into my room one morning, while I was at breakfast, with an appearance of unusual concern in his aspect. Those events which occasion our most pungent grief are often first and most eagerly communicated to us by our friends. He told me with great regret, that he had just seen a letter from Berwick at the post-office, sealed with black, that the superscription addressed it to the Rev. Mr. Lyndesay, of whom I have said so much, and that it was written in the hand of a gentleman by whom letters had often been directed to me. I had, by that very post, received a letter from my Berwick friend (but not sealed with mourning wax), informing me that he had lately visited my father at Cornhill, that he had been

very ill, but was now better, and earnestly requesting me to continue my diligent application to my studies: which, with the blessing of God, would procure me a comfortable subsistence. My friends well new my ardent affection for my father, and my exquisite feelings, therefore this fair stratagem was practised to keep my mind composed, and that it might not be diverted from its useful pursuits till the approaching vacation. The melancholy event was now demonstrated to me. I ran, in a frenzy of grief, to Mr. Lyndesay's, and told him that I was already acquainted with the letter which he had received, and with the loss which had befallen me. Himself and his worthy wife gently confirmed what I had anticipated.

"I shall relate two remarkable anecdotes on Captain Andrews and on Captain Noel, they will be respected by some, they will be slighted by others, at the worst they will not be altogether unentertaining.

"Captain Noel had a strong presentiment that he would lose his leg in that engagement; what was the foundation of this idea I know not. He was a truly brave man, and the apprehension by no means dispirited him; on the contrary, he one day jocularly tied his leg—the very leg which was afterwards wounded,—with his handkerchief, up to his thigh, and attempted to move with that great disadvantage. 'I am trying,' said he, 'how I could walk or hop after the loss of a leg.'

"My anecdote concerning the brave Captain Andrews is of a more serious and important nature. This anecdote was communicated to me by Captain Harvey, of the English Fusileers, who was on board of the *Defiance* at Byng's engagement. He was a gentleman of the most undisputed integrity and honour; he was Captain Andrews's messmate and intimate friend.

"This valiant and amiable commander, whose death was extremely deplored, and whose memory will be immortal, was very grave and pensive on the morning of his fatal 20th of May. His courage was indisputable; he had given proofs of it in the former part of his life. His friend Captain Harvey took the liberty to remark this unseasonable air of melancholy to himself. 'My dear Andrews,' said he to him, 'I know that you are a hero; but I am sorry to see you in a solemn reverie at this time, it hurts your own credit, and it may have a discouraging effect on your friends.' 'Captain Harvey,' replied Andrews, 'my heart thanks you for your seasonable admonition. I will instantly shake of this ignominious gravity, but pardon it, my dear friend, on account of its extraordinary cause. I never was a superstitious man, though I never was such a vulgar fool as to despise religion. But last night I was prodigiously impressed with a dream, of which I

have not now time to tell you the particulars, and which I am assured, without the possibility of a doubt, was oracularly prophetic of my death in this day's action. But depend upon it, I will die like a man; my death shall do credit to myself, to my friends, and to my country.' He nobly fulfilled his promise. He took a most affectionate leave of Harvey when they were retiring to their respective stations. 'He gave me a friendly and ardent kiss,' said Captain Harvey, 'but with cold lips.' His attack of the French (for *his* ship began the engagement) was vigorous and splendid to the highest degree. He was killed by a cannon ball, and I believe in the first quarter of an hour of the fight."

THOMAS BEWICK.

Thomas Bewick, the restorer of wood-engraving in England, in his charming *Memoirs*, published in 1862, relates the following experience. We cite it as a type of many others with which biography and literature abound:—

"In Christmas week, 1784, while I was amusing myself with sliding on the ice at Ovingham, which was as smooth almost as a looking-glass, between Eltringham and that place,—I know not what came over my mind, but something ominous haunted it, of a gloomy change impending over the family. At this I was surprised, for I had never before felt any such sensation, and presently scouted it as some whim of the imagination. The day was to be one of cheerfulness; for Mr. and Mrs. Storey—distant relations of my father's, and for whom my parents had the greatest regard—had been, with other friends, invited to dine with us at Cherryburn. At dinner, all was kindness and cheerfulness, and my father was as usual, full of his jokes, and telling some of his facetious stories and anecdotes. For two, or perhaps three Sundays after this, I was prevented from getting over the water by the ice and other floods, and returned from Ovingham without seeing or hearing how all were at home. The Sunday after, upon making my usual call at the gardener's in Ovingham,—where, when at school, we always left our dinner poke, and dined, he informed me, with looks of grief, that my mother was very unwell. I posted off in haste across the river, to see her. Upon my asking her, earnestly, how she was, she took me apart, and told me it was nearly all over with her; and she described to me how she had got her death. She had been called up, on a severe frosty night, to see a young woman in the hamlet below, who was taken ill; and, thinking the bog she had to pass through might be frozen hard enough to bear

her, she "slumped" deep into it, and, before she had waded through it, she got very wet, and a "perishment" of cold; and, in that state, she went to give her advice as to what was best to be done with her patient. I employed my friend, Dr. Bailes, to visit her, and I ran up from Newcastle two or three times a week with his medicines for her; but all would not do: she died on the 20th February, 1785, aged 58 years. She was possessed of great innate powers of mind, which had been cultivated by a good education, as well as by her own endeavours. For these, and for her benevolent, humane disposition, and good sense, she was greatly respected, and, indeed, revered by the whole neighbourhood. My eldest sister, who was down from London on a visit to her home at the time of my mother's illness and death, by her over-exertion and anxiety, brought on an illness; and, for the convenience of medical aid and better nursing, I brought her to my hitherto little happy cot, at the Forth, where she died on the 24th June, 1785, aged 30 years. These were gloomy days to me! Some short time before my sister died, upon her requesting me, and my promising her, that I would see her buried at Ovingham, she proposed to sing me a song. I thought this very strange, and felt both sorrow and surprise at it; but she smiled at me, and began her song of "All things have but a Time." I had heard the old song before, and thought pretty well of it; but hers was a later and a very much better version of it.

"During this time I observed a great change in the looks and deportment of my father. He had, what is called, "never held up his head" since the death of my mother; and, upon my anxiously pressing him to tell me what ailed him, he said he had felt as if he were shot through from the breast to the shoulders with a great pain that hindered him from breathing freely. Upon my mentioning medical assistance, he rejected it, and told me, if I sent him any drugs, I might depend upon it he would throw them all behind the fire. He wandered about all summer alone, with a kind of serious look, and took no pleasure in anything, till near the 15th November, which, I understand, was his birthday, and on which he completed his 70th year, and on that day he died. He was buried beside my mother and sister at Ovingham."

It is also remarkable that the last production of this artist was a vignette of Cherryburn, his native place, the spot where he entered the world, with a funeral passing by it, or from it, and a boat waiting on the river below, as if to take him away from it.

HUGH MILLER.

Professor Masson, in giving his Recollections of Hugh Miller, (*Macmillan's Magazine*, May, 1865) declares he has hardly known a man in whom there was so much of what Goethe calls the "demonic element," as in Hugh Miller. One of his ancestors—a certain Donald Roy—was a pious Highland seer of a hundred years back, of whom there were still strange legends. "Now," says Professor Masson, "not only had he a singular fascination for the memory of this second-sighted ancestor, but there was a vein in his life, as it is related in his autobiography, which it is difficult to suppose that he did not attribute to his descent from that Celtic worthy. He never speaks of second-sight or any other of that class of phenomena, except in the rational spirit of modern science; but he tells stories of his own childhood,* on the faith of which the believers in the 'occult' might claim him as a 'medium.' Thus, he tells us how, playing alone one day at the stair-foot of the long low house in Cromarty, where he had been born, and where he and his mother dwelt while his father was at sea, he felt a sudden presence on the landing-place above him, and, looking up, saw 'the form of' a large, tall, very old man, attired in a light blue great coat, steadfastly regarding him. Though sadly frightened, he at once divined the figure to be old John Fettes, his buccaneering great-grandfather, who had built the house, and had been dead some sixty years. Again, there is this remarkable story of what happened in the same long low house on the evening of the 10th of October, 1807. On this evening it was supposed his father's ship foundered at sea with all on board, for she left Peterhead harbour that day, and the last ever heard of her was that she had been seen tacking out into the open sea during a terrible tempest.

"My mother was sitting beside the household fire, plying the cheerful needle, when the house door, which had been left unfastened, fell open, and I was despatched from her side to shut it. What follows must be regarded as simply the recollection, though a very vivid one, of a boy who had completed his fifth year only a month before.

"Day had not wholly disappeared, but it was fast posting on to night, and a grey haze spread a neutral tint of dimness over every more distant object, but left the nearer ones comparatively distinct, when I saw at the open door, within less than a yard of my breast, as plainly as ever I saw anything, a dissevered hand and arm stretched toward me. Hand and arm were apparently those of a female; they bore a livid and sodden

* See *Spiritual Magazine*, Vol. II., p. 103.

appearance ; and, directly fronting me, where the body ought to have been, there was only blank, transparent space, through which I could see the dim forms of the objects beyond. I was fearfully startled, and ran shrieking to my mother, telling her what I had seen ; and the house-girl, whom she next sent to shut the door, apparently affected by my terror, also returned frightened, and said that she too had seen the woman's hand ; which, however, did not seem to be the case. And, finally, my mother going to the door, saw nothing, though she appeared much impressed by the extremeness of my terror and the minuteness of my description. I communicate the story without attempting to explain it. The supposed apparition may have been merely a momentary affection of the eye, of the nature described by Sir Walter Scott, in his *Demonology*, and Sir David Brewster in his *Natural Magic*. But, if so, the affection was one of which I experienced no after-return, and its coincidence, in the case, with the probable time of my father's death, seems, at least, curious.' "

After citing this narrative, Professor Masson continues—
" Notwithstanding the carefully guarded tone of the last sentence or two, my impression is that Hugh Miller did all his life carry about with him, as Scott did, but to a greater extent, a belief in ghostly influences, in mysterious agencies of the air, earth, and water, always operating ; and sometimes revealing themselves. Though he had experienced, as he says, writing in 1853, no after-return of his childish liability to visions, he seems to have had, all his life, a more than ordinary interest in stories of the supernatural, and far less disposition than men of his weight and amount of scientific information usually have to discredit the possibility of abnormal impulses and coincidences, sudden nervous horrors, and the bursting in upon man of unearthly sights and sounds. His books are full of legends of the kind, Celtic and Lowland, so bold that one sees his imagination clinging to what his reason would fain reject. If he had been as cunning as Goethe, he would have formulized the thing in a high mythological expression 'after the manner of the ancients.' But Goethe only believed, from his observation of nature and affairs, that some agency unseen and perhaps personal and multitudinous, did intermingle with nature and human affairs, causing the incalculable and the contradictory. Hugh Miller, I fancy, believed in the breaking through of this agency so as to be visible."

CASE OF SUDDEN HEALING.

THE secular press of the country has for some time past been filled with narratives of the so-called "miracle," by which an estimable and "pious" lady (after the manner of the church) had been almost instantly cured of a severe chronic complaint by the intervention of a presence whom she designated as the Lord Jesus Christ. The facts in brief, as condensed from the varying accounts, are these:—

"The Rev. Moses Sherman is a clergyman of the Methodist denomination in the village of Piermont, N. H., which is located on the Connecticut River, about 30 miles above Lebanon. For the past three or four years he has resided there with his family, consisting of wife (about 35 years of age) and child, the former of whom has been unwell and sickly ever since the birth of the latter, 12 years ago. . . . During the three or four years' residence in Piermont the lady has been almost wholly incapacitated from attending to ordinary household duties, and been confined to the house largely. . . . About a year ago Mrs. Sherman was prostrated by her ailments, was obliged to take her bed, and from that time up to the latter part of last August she never left the house. Her physical strength left her entirely, and she became completely bed-ridden, unable to stand or even to feed herself. The diseases continued to prey upon her till she was reduced to a state of utter helplessness. For the lady to leave the bed unassisted became an impossibility, the services of two persons being required to lift her. The best medical assistance which could be procured was obtained, and human science failed completely to restore the exhausted and almost imperceptible vitality. The three physicians who faithfully attended the patient were finally compelled to acknowledge that their resources had been exhausted, and that they could do nothing. . . .

All hope of recovery was given up by her, but her mind still continued clear and unclouded. On the night of Wednesday, August 27, the patient was lifted as usual from and to the bed by her husband and an assistant, and it was noticed that she appeared more animated than usual in her conversation. She said that she had been thinking a great deal upon the work of the Saviour in healing the sick, and wondering why people could not be healed now as then. She had been praying to God to relieve her infirmities, and it seemed as though an answer to her prayers was impending. Suddenly she became aware of the presence of strange and unusual influ-

ences. *First there was a feeling of intense coldness, which set her in a shiver, and which alarmed her husband, who was in the room. He was unable to perceive anything unusual. Hardly had this sensation subsided when an entirely opposite one was experienced—the room seeming to be suddenly filled, as Mrs. Sherman expressed it, ‘with a current of hot air,’* She affirmed that she next distinctly heard a Voice, which replied, in answer to the prayers, that her faith was not strong. She inwardly prayed, ‘Lord, help thou my unbelief!’ and soon became conscious of returning strength. She then and there arose from the bed, approached and awakened her husband, and exclaimed that the Lord had healed her. The family was called up, and all were astonished and overjoyed at the remarkable occurrence. Mrs. Sherman walked all through the house, and the remainder of the night was spent by the members of the family in discussing the miracle, and wondering at the transformation which they had witnessed. On the following Sunday the minister and his wife walked together to church, the story having in the meantime spread like wildfire through the town. The church was crowded. And, after a few words from the pastor, Mrs. Sherman took the pulpit and stood for over an hour telling the wondering congregation the story of her deliverance, and praising God for the cure He had wrought. Her health has continued perfect up to the present time. . . . The effect produced on the community by this event may be described as something immense. The whole town was in an uproar when the ocular demonstration of the miracle was first apparent, and the belief prevailed generally that God had really descended among them and shown a wonderful instance of His might.”

The matter has received the closest scrutiny from the friends of church claims, the M.D.s who were smitten with discomfiture by the strange return to the world of activity of one whom they had adjudged a candidate for the “narrow house,” and the disciples of science—the first class of thinkers uniting with Moses and his wife Ellen M. Sherman, in their published card, in declaring that “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, has been pleased, in His infinitely condescending love, for the glory of His own blessed name, thus to visit our humble home ;” the two latter attributing Mrs. S.’s cure to the effect of a highly excited imagination.

The disciples of spirit communion have, however, an hypothesis greatly superior, because more in harmony with the universal laws of God and Nature, which are incapable of special or “miraculous” suspension. Those who follow the lady’s description of her sensations regarding heat and cold while

undergoing cure will be struck by the similitude of her feelings with those of a medium when being brought under spirit influence—which was the true state of the case. Desirous of gaining information bearing upon the phenomenon, we asked, at an early date, the spirits controlling Mrs. J. H. Conant concerning the reliability of the cure, and received the following reply from one of the invisible intelligences:—

“ I am informed that it is correct, so far as that it occurred ; but you speak incorrectly when you call it a miracle. It was no miracle, but simply an action of natural law. The woman herself was a medium—a medium adapted to just such a manifestation. Her prayers and earnest desires drew to her a class of spirits who were able to cure her through her own mediumship. We are told that they did so. Let us hope that there may be many such co-called miracles in your midst.”

The fact has been kept carefully out of sight by this worthy minister and his wife that any dealings with Spiritualism had been participated in by them, but the following extracts from a letter by E. Anne Hinman, dated West Winsted, Ct., Oct. 28th, point out the “missing link” in the story of the cure, and show the words of the controlling spirit above given to be correct, and to have been founded upon a knowledge of the case which *we* certainly did not possess at the time:—

“ The instance of sudden healing in the case of Mrs. Sherman is a fact, and I myself am acquainted with the parties. I have several times been entertained in the family of Mr. Ward E. Clark, of Swift Water, N. H., who is a brother of Mrs. Sherman, the lady who was healed, and the facts were written to me in a letter from Mrs. Clark before the account appeared in print. . . . The sister-in-law, Mrs. Clark, spoken of above, persuaded her (Mrs. Sherman) *to send to Mrs. Robinson, in Chicago, for an examination, which she made and forwarded to her with magnetized papers and plaisters, which she used a few days, but which were discarded after that time, on account of the prejudice of her husband against them, but which in my opinion were the instruments through which the healing was brought about.* There are many reasons why the spirit coming to her should take the guise and character of Jesus. In the first place, she had confidence that He could do all things, and that of course made her receptive, when, if he had appeared *as another spirit*, she would have been *sceptical and doubting*, and hence less receptive.—“ *Banner of Light*,” November 22, 1873.

SPIRITS, SPIRITUALISTS AND THE GOVERN- MENTS OF FRANCE.

PART I.

IN the first volume of the New Series of the Spiritual Magazine, 1866, page 212, the probability has been suggested of spirits unadvanced out of the sphere of their earthly affections and creeds, in all eras of great religious, social or political change, not only watching the progress of events, but even mingling palpably in the struggles of men. Sympathy, as we have there observed, would attract like to like, and the desire of the spirits being—as in the typical cases referred to in this article*—to demonstrate the verity of the old faith, through signs and wonders which not even their opponents in the flesh should dare to gainsay, they would carefully seek out amongst the human beings open to their influence, through similarity of belief, those organisms most suitable to the manifestation of their presence, and develop them as their “mediums.” In many cases too, the very exaltation produced by religious enquiry, or by political agitation, and by the excitement of the universal mental movement, would, in itself, prepare the medium for the use of the spirits, and bring him or her into *rappor*t with them. And should we not, possibly in these renewed convulsions around the couch of each moribund religion—around the cradle of each infant truth, born not unfrequently of the dying religion—learn to recognize the operative forces of the Alpha and Omega of all time?

The history of the political struggles in France, always more or less connected with the conflict of old and new religious truth, furnishes us through various centuries with singularly vivid glimpses into the operation of this law. The fifteenth century shows us the typical history of Joan of Arc, now enshrined in men's minds as one of their most tender and sacredly heroic historic memories. At the present moment we have repeated apparitions in various parts of France, of the Virgin Mary, notably in Alsace, where the minds of men are troubled to the very core by political changes and religious agitation. Between the time of the Maid of Orleans and our own, the history of France presents us ever and anon with scarcely less startling revelations of the interposition of spiritual beings in the ceaseless warfare of human life. We will now present our readers with some

* Julian, the Apostate, the Maid of Kent, and the late struggles between Paganism and Christianity in Madagascar and New Zealand.

singular relations, drawn from the pages of Eliphas Levi, in his *Histoire de la Haute Magie* and other sources, relative to the period extending from 1772 to 1839.

THE JOANITES AND THE NEO-JOANITES.

In 1772, an inhabitant of St. Maudé, named Loiseant, being in church, believed he saw kneeling near to him a very singular personage; he was a sun-burnt man, who wore for his sole garment, a shirt of coarse woollen. This man had a long beard and crisp curling hair, and around his neck a scarlet and circular scar; he carried a book, upon which was traced in letters of gold, the inscription—"Ecce Agnus Dei."

Loiseant was astonished greatly that no one noticed this remarkable person; he finished his prayer and returned home. There he found the same personage awaiting him, he advanced to speak to him, and ask who he was, and what he wanted, when suddenly his fantastic visitor had disappeared! Loiseant took to his bed, ill with fever, but could not sleep. In the night he suddenly saw his chamber illuminated by a red light, and believing it must proceed from fire, started up in his bed, when suddenly in the middle of his room, upon the table, he beheld a golden plate, and in this plate, bathed with blood, the head of his visitor of yesterday! This head was encircled with a red aureole. The eyes rolled in a terrible manner, and the lips opening as if to utter a cry, a strange and hissing voice exclaimed, "I await the heads of kings, and the heads of the courtesans of kings. I await Herod and Herodias." Then the aureole became extinguished, and the sick man saw no more.

Within a few days he recovered, and was able to return to his business affairs. Crossing the Place Louis XV., he was met by a poor man, who asked for an alms. Loiseant, without looking at him, drew out a piece of money and threw it into the hat of the man. "Thanks," said he, "*This is the head of a king, but here,*" added he, extending his hand, and pointing to the middle of the Place, "*here will fall another king's head, and it is that which I am awaiting.*"

Loiseant then first looked with surprise at the beggar, and uttered a cry, recognizing in him the face of the vision. "Hush!" said the mendicant; "they will think thee mad, for no one here can see me except thyself. Thou hast recognized me I see; I am in fact St. John the Forerunner, and I come to announce to thee the chastisement of the successors of Herod, and of the heirs of Caiphas. Thou canst repeat all that I shall say to thee."

From this time, Loiseant believed that he almost always saw

near him St. John the Baptist. The phantom used to converse with him at considerable length regarding the misfortunes which were about to fall upon France and upon the Church.

Loiseant related his vision to various persons, who being struck by it, became visionaries like himself. They formed a mystical society, which met in great secrecy. The members of this association placed themselves in a circle, holding the hands of each other, and in silence awaiting communications. They used thus to wait, occasionally several hours; then the figure of St. John would appear amongst them, and they would all, or successively, fall into the magnetic sleep, and behold the scenes of the future Revolution and Restoration unfold before their eyes.

The spiritual director of this sect, or this circle, was a monk named Dom Gerle; he became its chief upon the death of Loiseant, which took place in 1788. At the epoch of the Revolution, having been seized with the Republican enthusiasm, he was rejected by the other sectaries, who followed in this the inspirations of the principal somnambule, whom they called Sister Française André.

Dom Gerle had also his somnambule, and he began to exercise, in an attic in Paris, the then new profession of a magnetiser. His seeress was an old and nearly blind woman, named Catherine Théot. She made predictions which came to pass; she cured various sick persons; and, as her prophecies had something more or less of a political nature, the police of the Committee of Public Safety were not long before they busied themselves with them.

One evening Catherine Théot, surrounded by her adepts, was in a state of ecstasy. "Listen!" said she. "I hear the noise of footsteps. It is the mysterious Elected One of Providence; it is the Angel of the Revolution; it is he who will be both its saviour and its victim—the King of Ruin and of Regeneration. Do you see him? He approaches. He also has his forehead surrounded by the bloody aureole of the Baptists. It is he who will bear all the crimes of those who will cause his death! Do you not see him dressed as for a festival, holding flowers in his hand—they are the crowns of his martyrdom. "Oh, how cruel have been thy trials, O my son!" she cried, "and how will ungrateful men curse thy memory across the centuries yet to come. Rise, rise, bow yourselves before him! He is here—the King of the Bloody Sacrifices!"

Our author then adds, that the door opened noiselessly and a man entered the room, with his hat drawn down over his eyes, and wrapt in a cloak. That the assembly rising, Catherine Théot exclaimed, extending her trembling hands toward the newly

arrived, "I knew that thou would'st come. He whom thou dost not see, but whom I see at my right, showed thee to me to-day, when an accusation was made against us to thee. We were accused of conspiring for the King, and in truth I have spoken of a King—of a King, of whom the Forerunner at this moment shows the crown stained with blood—over whose head do I see it suspended? Over thine, Maximilian!"

The visitor, at these words, with a surprised and furtive glance round the assembly, enquired what this might mean? Then Catherine Théot continued her rhapsodical address, exclaiming, amongst other things, that "it would be a grand day when a man clothed in blue, and holding in his hand a sceptre of flowers, would *become the King* and Saviour of the World (?) and placing his foot upon the head of the monster ready to devour him, shall declare both to executioners and victims, that a God exists!" "Cease to conceal thyself, Robespierre," she said in conclusion, "and show us that head which Providence will throw into the empty scale of the balance. The head of Louis XVI. is heavy, and thy head alone can equalize its weight!" According to our author, Robespierre appeared to regard these words with contempt, as fanatical menaces, and the dotage of an old crone, and declared his belief that he had been watched by their spies, "And since," he said, abruptly departing, "you insist upon your unknown visitor being Maximilian Robespierre, Representative of the People,—as Representative of the People I shall denounce you to the Committee of Public Safety, and cause proceedings to be taken towards your arrest." As he departed, Catherine Théot joined her hands together, exclaiming, "Respect his wishes—he is King and Pontiff of the new era! If we are struck—it will be Providence who strikes us through him. Let us extend our necks towards the axe of Providence."

The disciples of Catherine Théot awaited all night their arrest, but no one appeared. During the following day they separated. Two other days and two other nights passed over, during which the members of the sect did not seek to conceal themselves. On the fifth day, however, Catherine Théot, and those who were termed her accomplices, were denounced to the Jacobins by a secret enemy of Robespierre, who adroitly insinuated to the auditors doubts against the Tribune. The dictatorship was spoken of,—even the name of King had been pronounced. This was known to Robespierre—and how was it that this had been tolerated by him? Robespierre shrugged his shoulders. On the morrow, however, Catherine Théot, Dom Gerle, and some others, were arrested, and sent to those prisons which never again opened for those who had entered

them, except to furnish the daily supply of victims for the executioners.

How the history of Robespierre's interview with Catherine Théot transpired is not known. Already the counter-policy of the future *Thermidoriens* watched suspiciously the presumed Dictator, and he was accused of mysticism because he believed in a God. Nevertheless, Robespierre was neither friend nor enemy of the sect of the New "*Joannites*." He had gone to Catherine Théot in order to observe the phenomena taking place there. Dissatisfied at having been recognized, he left, uttering menaces which he did not put into execution. Those who transformed the conventicle of an old monk and an old fanatical woman into a conspiracy, had hoped through this accusation to have at least cast doubt or ridicule which should cling to the reputation of the "incorruptible Maximilian."

The prophecy of Catherine Théot had its accomplishment in the inauguration of the worship of the Supreme Being, and the rapid reaction of Thermidor. During this time, the sect which had rallied round Sister André, whose revelations were written down by the Sieur Ducy, continued to receive their visions and their miracles. Their fixed idea was the preservation of Legitimacy through the future reign of Louis XVII. Many a time, in dreams, they saved the little orphan of the Temple, and in reality believed that they had saved him. Ancient prophecies promised the throne of the Lilies to a young man who had once been a captive. St. Brigetta, St. Hildegarde, Bernard Tollard, Lichtenberger, all announced a miraculous restoration, after great disasters. The "*Neo-Joannites*" were the interpreters and the continuers of these predictions. Hence never was a Louis XVII. wanting to them. There were seven or eight Louis XVII. successively—one perfectly authentic and not the less miraculously saved.

It was to the influence of this sect, says Eliphas Levi, that we owe later the revelations of the peasant Martin, of Gallardon, and the marvels of Vintras, to which we shall come in due course.

Enthusiasm, through these magnetic circles became contagious, and was transmitted from Brother to Brother. After the death of Sister André, second sight and the prophetic power became the gifts of a man named Legros, who was at Charenton when Martin was temporarily placed there. He recognized a Brother in the peasant of Beance. All these sectaries through the strength of their desires for Louis XVII., in a sort of fashion, "*actually created him*," says our author. That is to say, they called forth so much of the spirit, or spiritual appearance of Louis XVII., that certain mediumistic natures transformed

themselves into the image and resemblance of the magnetic type, and ended by believing themselves in reality the Royal child escaped from the Temple. They attracted to themselves all the reflections of this sweet and fragile victim, and were full of recollections of circumstances alone known to the family of Louis XVI. "This phenomenon, however incredible it may appear to be," says Levi, "is neither impossible nor unheard of." Paracelsus assures us that if, by an extraordinary effort of the will, a person could believe themselves to be some one other than themselves, they would immediately know the secret thoughts of that person, and would attract to themselves the most secret memories. "Indeed, I have been conscious," says Levi, of himself, "of holding in dreams often imaginary conversations with a friend, in which previously unrevealed knowledge of that friend's life have come to me."

Amongst the false Louis XVII.'s, therefore, we should do well to recognize two classes—impostors, *purs et simples*, and those who were suffering from hallucination—or perhaps were possessed by spirits, seeking to carry out the dominant conviction of some principle vividly operative upon the age.*

Amongst the last class we ought specially to distinguish Nänndorff, a seer of the Swedenborg type, and of a conviction so

* In the second volume of Madden's *Phantasmata* we find the following curious matter relative to the impostors assuming the character or mission of Joan of Arc, immediately after her death. Two young girls, of the vicinity of Paris, regarded themselves as divinely appointed to continue the mission of Joan of Arc—one was burned, the other escaped the flames by a recantation of her error. Another, *militairement équipée, armée de pied en cap*, "exhibited herself in all public places of Cologne. She declared herself divinely commissioned to cause one of two pretenders to the episcopal throne of Treves—which was then contested—to be consecrated. She was excommunicated. It was to the notoriety acquired by this impostor that the report is attributable that Joan of Arc had not been burnt, and that the English had substituted another culprit for her at the stake. Quicherat says," continues Dr. Madden, "that this impostor, in 1436, imposed even on the family of Joan of Arc, and had exhibited extraordinary valour in Germany, France, and Italy. After having made a noise in the world during five years, she disappeared, leaving public opinion altogether changed in regard to the heroine who preceded her. In the opinion of some the true Joan was not dead, and the exploits of the second became confounded with those of the first. Then began to be formed the tradition in which La Pucelle was treated like the heroes of romance of the time of Charlemagne, absorbing all the military glory of the time."

In the second volume of the Abbé Bartheleme's *Histoire de Jeanne d'Arc*, we find two official documents of unquestionable authority; one dated 21st of August, 1436, and the other October of the same year; existing in the last century, in the archives of Orleans, and taken from the work of Quicherat. The first is a voucher for expenditure incurred by the Municipality of Orleans—a gratuity made to Jehan Dulys, brother of the Pucelle; and the other document is a similar voucher, dated October, 1436, for a gratuity made to Cœur de Lys, another member of the family of Jeanne d'Arc, who then held the office of Herald in Orleans, on account of a journey which he had made to his sister, the Pucelle, who was then at Erlou, in Luxembourg, and for having brought letters from the said Pucelle to the King.

contagious that even the ancient servitors of the Royal Family firmly believed that they recognized their prince, and threw themselves weeping at his feet. He even bore upon his body the particular marks and scars of Louis XVII. ; he related the story of his childhood with an overpowering appearance of truth, and entered into those insignificant details of recollection which are so impressive of reality. His very features were such as the orphan son of Louis XVI. would have borne had he lived to be of the same age. One only thing was wanting to have made him what he appeared to be—that is to say, *not* to have been—Nänndorff.

LORD AMBERLEY ON SPIRITUALISM.

LORD AMBERLEY is the son of an Earl; and in a country which “dearly loves a lord,” and where the question generally is—not as to what is said, but—who says it? This may account for his article on Spiritualism, in the *Fortnightly Review* for January, receiving more attention than it could properly lay claim to. His Lordship’s “Experiences of Spiritualism” appear to have been limited to attendance at five *séances* with different mediums, “singularly barren of results,” and with this experience he deems himself quite competent to sit in judgment on the whole matter, to overrule the conclusions of those who have given years to its investigation, and to decide the question not only for himself, but for mankind generally. We think Goethe must have had some gentleman of the Amberley type in view when he penned these lines in *Faust* :

“Hence know I you, immensely learned sir!
 What *you* can’t touch, that’s out of all men’s reach;
 What *you* can’t grasp, that’s not to be conceived;
 What *you* can’t see through, that must none admit;
 What *you* can’t weigh, that has no weight at all;
 What *you’ve* not coined, that cannot be true gold!”

We all remember what Sydney Smith told us of Earl Russell, that he would be equally ready, at a moment’s notice, to perform an operation for the stone, take command of the Channel Fleet, or form a Whig Administration; and if his son does not share the political ability, he at least inherits to the full all the self-confidence and temerity of his noble father.

It is evident from his article, that Lord Amberley’s relation to Spiritualism has been—not that of an honest investigator seeking the truth—but that of a dogmatic negationist, seeking only for evidence to confirm his foregone conclusion that mediums are impostors, and doing his utmost to make them

appear so, without being very scrupulous, or exhibiting any nice sense of honour in the means he used to that end. He put leading questions, and got wrong replies. He professed to be receiving a spirit-message, while he made the movements of the table by which that message was supposed to be given. The thought never seems to have crossed his mind that as the magnet attracts steel, so the man who goes to consult the spirits with falseness in his heart, and deceit in his act, attracts to himself spirits of kindred temper, and that while he is chuckling over his own cleverness, at having tricked the medium, he is really the ready dupe of these invisible tricksters, who fool him to the top of his bent, and laugh at his conceited folly.*

An honest mind, a humble spirit, a sincere and earnest desire for, and love of the truth, these are primary conditions for successful investigations of the experimental evidences of a future life, and for obtaining truthful communications from the spirit-world. That Lord Amberley should be ignorant of even the A, B, C of the spiritual alphabet need not surprise us; but it is surprising to find that his Lordship seems all unaware that the man who practises trickery and deception while professing inquiry into an important subject, forfeits thereby all claims to have his bare word credited.

When he confesses to, and recommends simulation and laying traps as aids to investigation, we may well, in reading his "Experiences of Spiritualism," bear in mind the warning he has given us as to "the extreme untrustworthiness of evidence."

Lord Amberley is an enlightened infidel, who regards Christianity as a played-out superstition, and has no more faith in the marvels of Scripture than of Spiritualism. Indeed, his attack on Spiritualism seems little more than a feint, the real point of attack against which the fire of his masked batteries is directed, is the Bible miracles. He insists that those of the present time are better attested; not, of course, for the purpose of crediting Spiritualism, but to discredit the Bible. In doing so, he certainly points out with much force the inconsistency of orthodox Christians, in denying the well-attested narratives of modern spiritual phenomena, and it may be well that they should have the benefit of the lesson Lord Amberley

* Lord Amberley seems really to have attended these *séances* very much as "a lark." The Spiritualistic hymns sung at one of the *séances* he attended were too lugubrious for him, so he tells us:—"At this distressing stage, I proposed that we should strike up 'We won't go home till morning,' or some other jovial song.' The suggestion was at once accepted by the mediums, who said that this description of music would do quite as well." His lordship apparently belongs to the class known as "jolly dogs," to whom a "free-and-easy" is more congenial than a spiritual *séance*.

has read them. This paragraph is the best in the article. His Lordship is willing to admit that there are mesmeric and psychological phenomena not fully understood, and which are worth investigation; but what can only be adequately explained as the operation of spirits, *ab extra*, his Lordship sets down to either mendacity or delusion. Spiritualists are the dupes of their own credulity and imagination. They do not observe carefully, nor test vigorously, nor write accurately. They "betray an hopeless inability to discriminate between adequate and inadequate proof of facts, between unintelligible reality and commonplace imposture." The marvels they attest would vanish "under the withering touch of literal exactness," such as that of Lord Amberley, for example. His Lordship proceeds:—

Nor is this true only of the modern wonders alleged by Spiritualists; it applies equally to the ancient wonders alleged by other authorities. Finding, as we do, that positive falsehood is still rampant; that credulous acceptance of fantastic theories and unsifted statements is still prevalent; that the most improbable events are believed on the smallest possible evidence,—how can it be reasonably doubted that similar causes must have produced similar effects in former ages? Not to dwell, as is often done, on the more scientific character of our own age—for experience shows that the spread of scientific knowledge may fail to shake unscientific habits of thought—it is sufficient to urge that the totally undisciplined minds of bygone races were not likely to furnish evidence of a more trustworthy nature than that now offered by men constantly subjected to the critical spirit of our age. It is hard to understand—or would be hard were not flagrant incongruities so common—how the same individuals can reject with scorn the statements of Spiritualists, yet receive with faith the equally incredible statements which form part of their religious creed. Evidence offered by many witnesses, whose names are known, who have positively seen what they describe, who may be personally questioned, whose untruths, if any, may be detected, they do not even deem worthy of examination. Evidence offered by single witnesses, whose names are unknown or doubtful, who are beyond the reach of all inquiry, whose untruths, if any, there are no means of detecting, they believe even without examination. To assert that a lady floats in the air is ridiculous; to assert that a man walked on the water is quite credible. To believe that spirits return to us is a sign of folly; to believe that after actual death human beings were restored to life is rational religion. Angels might descend to converse with prophets; spirits cannot descend to converse with their dearest friends. That a table should be moved in some inexplicable way is not to be believed; that a sea or a river should be cleft in twain is not to be doubted. It might almost be maintained that the readiness with which the public accepts the marvellous and the inexplicable, varies directly as it is ill-attested. For not only is the testimony offered by Spiritualists immeasurably stronger, both in kind and in amount, than that on which the orthodox miracles repose, but it conforms far more closely to scientific conditions, being offered in order to prove, not exceptional prodigies, wrought by exceptional men, in opposition to the laws of nature, but phenomena of every-day occurrence, subject to their own laws, which if not fully ascertained, are no less constant than those of the material world. The Churchman says, "Extraordinary events happened once, under conditions that will never recur." The Spiritualist says, "Extraordinary events happen daily, under certain conditions, and will always happen when those conditions are fulfilled." Any argument, then, that is used against the latter, tells with hundredfold force against the former.

It is instructive to contrast the shallow pretentiousness of Lord Amberley with the careful and thorough investigation

of the distinguished scientist whose article appears in the current number of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, to which we have drawn attention on another page. The spirit-world and its manifestations will not quite perish under the "withering touch" of Lord Amberley. We think they can just manage to survive it.

T. S.

NEW SPIRITUAL JOURNALS.

WE have received the first two numbers of *The Progressive Spiritualist and Free Thought Advocate*, a weekly journal devoted to the Exposition of Spiritualism and the Promotion of Religious and Social Reform, edited by John Tyerman, and published at Melbourne. This new journal gives us but little information as to the progress of Spiritualism in Australia, but we have in it a good deal of very free talk on theological matters. Indeed, it might fitly be called the *Anti-Theological Spiritualist*. This is not to be wondered at, when we bear in mind that Mr. Tyerman was a clergyman of the Establishment, who has been expelled from his living for honestly avowing himself a Spiritualist. Nor need it surprise us that under these circumstances the very name of Christianity should be distasteful to him. In his first article he objects to the name Christian Spiritualist as misleading, the two terms in it being, he thinks, incompatible; but then he makes it plain enough that he speaks of Christianity only as the synonym for Churchianity or Church dogmas; and he avows that "if by Christianity were meant nothing but the simple, beautiful, practical, benevolent religion taught and exemplified by the noble Jesus, then Spiritualism and Christianity would indeed be at one. Spiritualism, as a religion, is essentially Christian in that sense. But that is not what creed-making and creed-defending believers mean by Christianity." So much the worse for creed-makers and creed-defenders, if it be so. But why should those who are most in harmony with the spirit and teachings of Christ abandon the name to those who to so large an extent corrupt and pervert that spirit and those teachings? Against this, and against all who may assert that Spiritualism conflicts with the spirit and principles of Christ's teaching and life, the name "Christian Spiritualist" is a standing protest. Except for this protest, as a distinctive designation it were hardly needed. A present realisation of spiritual communion—a living Spiritualism, permeated with the faith in God and the divine charity to man which

Christ exemplified, would soon regenerate the Churches. As our contemporary testifies, "They greatly need something of the sort to give them fresh life, energy, and power, for they are languishing spiritually, and yearly becoming weaker, colder, and near their dissolution, which assuredly awaits them as they are now formed and constituted. . . . Spiritualism, supplying, as it does, too a present practical demonstration of immortality, is just such an ally as the churches need to enable them to repel the aggressive materialism of the age, and shed the light of another world upon the most darkened souls on earth." To accomplish, or to aid in effecting this great service to the Churches and the world, is, we apprehend, no slight part of the mission of Modern Spiritualism.

The *Progressive Spiritualist* is earnest; frank, courageous, and evidently of the Spiritual Church Militant. We wish it success in the hard fight it is likely to have with prejudice, bigotry, and superstition; but it will be the better part of valour not to make needless enemies of those with whom it should be in most friendly alliance.

The New Year also brings us No. 1 of a fortnightly journal, the *Pioneer of Progress*. The editor says:—"We hope to present in our columns from time to time articles representing every phase of Spiritualism, entirely free from sectarian or party spirit. We believe our platform is so broad and catholic in spirit, that it will exclude none from its arena. To all Spiritualists, whether they term themselves Independent, Scientific, Christian, Re-incarnational, or Progressional, or are known by any other title, we offer the 'right hand of fellowship,' and bid them 'God speed!'"

We quote from this opening number the following thoughtful article by T. Herbert Noyes, junr., on—

THE PARAY-LE-MONIAL PILGRIMAGE.

"The Paray-le-Monial Pilgrimage and the visions of the blessed M. M. Alacoque have been the theme of a protracted correspondence, and countless articles in contemporary literature, but we have noted with astonishment that the marrow of the question has been left untouched by one and all the disquisitions which have fallen under our notice. The reason is not far to seek—it lies in the unfortunate prejudice which still militates against the free admission to the Press of a mass of evidence of facts which has not yet received the *imprimatur* of our learned societies. But in very truth, the only reliable weapon against modern bigotry and superstition, and the popular prejudices which pass current under the stamp of orthodoxy in the Christian world, is to be found in the armoury

of Modern Spiritualism. By the light of its revelations, the pretensions of the Romish Hierarchy to the special favour of Heaven for the votaries of its fictions fade rapidly away, and the visions of the blessed M. M. Alacoque, shorn of their miraculous pretensions and prestige, and assigned to their legitimate source, become clear and intelligible. The experience of numberless creditable witnessess among our familiar friends forbids us to deny the authenticity of the visions and trances recorded in sacred literature and ecclesiastical annals.

“Such visions are seen daily by seers whose faculty or spiritual vision has been cultivated and developed—as every latent faculty with which we are endowed needs to be—by judicious exercise and careful attention to the requisite conditions. Those conditions were not unknown to the Church in its primitive times, for its ordinances and ceremonials embody the forgotten lore, and yield it readily to the student who is versed in mesmeric phenomena. The varied spiritual gifts exhibited in countless novel phases by our modern mediums are developed, as they were of old, in the case of Timothy, by the laying on of hands, and by the magnetic influence of circles in cases where the latent faculty exists:—and the consciousness of this latent faculty was no doubt ‘the call’ which our candidates for ordination now o’ days are still obliged to plead, though they have not the faintest conception of what was originally implied by the plea. The apostolical succession was indeed no fiction, but it has departed from the ministers of the Churches, and is now to be found outside their ranks. True mediums are the legitimate successors of the Apostles and Prophets, who were the mediums of olden times, and seership is but one of the many spiritual gifts they have inherited.

“But the light of modern experience has illuminated the mysteries which ecclesiastical tradition has obscured. It has dispelled the haze of supernaturalism. When a spirit speaks to a modern medium, he no longer says it is ‘*the Lord*’ who speaks, nor does he attribute infallibility to his inspiration, nor omniscience to the inspiring spirit. When he sees a vision he no longer attributes it directly to the Supreme Spirit of the universe. His eyes are open to a truer view of the unseen world and its inhabitants, who are in communication with the still incarnated inhabitants of our planet, but who are still fallible like ourselves, albeit a little higher up that vast mountain of Progress whose pinnacles are, far beyond telescopic range hidden, in the haze of eternity. We have learnt that the man, whether he be good, bad, or indifferent, who throws off his garment of flesh retains his personal identity beyond the grave, and is just as reliable or unreliable as a spirit as he was as a man. We

have learnt that there are numberless claimants, personators and impostors in the spirit world who assume names and designations to which they have no right, and delight in deluding us if we do not make the best possible use of our reason to detect their wiles. Shakespeare had a better warranty for his Pucks than our Royal Society would give him credit for. But it is not only to wilful deception on the part of unscrupulous unprogressive spirits that many prevailing delusions are due. There is much symbolical and allegorical teaching by truthful spirits which is received and imparted by honest and truthful seers, and which is liable to misinterpretation.

“There can be no doubt that M. M. Alacoque was a medium and a seeress, and it may be that she faithfully recorded, and did not wilfully exaggerate, the visions presented to her, but, being an ignorant and uneducated woman, and living in a community of superstitious nuns deeply imbued with ecclesiastical dogmas and traditions, and utterly ignorant of the natural character of the then exceptional phenomena which occurred to their sister, she, no doubt, was aided by them to misconstrue the communications she received, and so both misinterpreted their meaning and mistook their source. Most probably she was often victimized by some well-meaning but ill-judging spirit, who thought to comfort her by impersonating great personages, whose appearance was likely to be grateful to her. Moreover, modern experience has proved that the art of producing pictures is practised in the spirit-world, and such visions are often but allegorical pictures drawn by ingenious spirits, in luminous rays, which are presented for a moment to the eye of the seer. Works of imagination are not restricted to the surface of this planet. Herein is the key to the mystery of Paray-le-Monial, and the sooner the truth is publicly confessed and made known that such visions are matters of every-day occurrence in our midst, and that neither the seers who see them nor the places where they are seen have any pretensions to especial sanctity, the better will it be for the interests of truth, and the worse will it be for the miserable superstition and imposture by which the chains of Romish priestcraft are riveted on the necks of deluded pilgrims.”

The foregoing is but one of many illustrations that might be given of the way in which Spiritualism presents a clear and reasonable explanation of facts, denied by so-called Rationalists on the one hand, and perverted by superstition and priestcraft on the other.

PLUTARCH ON THE CESSATION OF ORACLES.

IN the *Fortnightly Review* for November, Mr. Brodribb, in an article of great interest, upon the Essays of Plutarch, writes as follows:—"One of Plutarch's most glorious essays (its genuineness has been questioned, but it harmonizes with his general scheme of thought) deals with one of those remarkable facts of the age which is significant of the great change then gradually stealing over men's minds. It is an attempt to an explanation of the failure or cessation of the oracles in the first century; and I imagine that it suggested the fine and well-known passage in Milton's Hymn on Christ's Nativity:—

The Oracles are dumb.
No voice, no hideous hum
Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving:
Apollo, from his shrine,
Can no more divine;
With hollow shriek—the sleep of Delphos leaving—
No mighty trance, or breathèd spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

In this essay Plutarch largely uses the Neoplatonic philosophy, and indulges in what must seem to us the most fanciful theological speculations. He clearly felt the subject one of great difficulty. A modern writer would seek an explanation of it in the altered spirit of the age, and refer the cessation of the Oracles to much the same general causes as those to which he could trace the disappearance of witchcraft. It is scarcely possible to define with precision the various influences which from time to time produce a change in the attitude of the human mind in regard to certain ideas and beliefs. We cannot, so to speak, put our finger on the exact causes and circumstances of these mental revolutions, but are obliged to rest in partial explanations. Of this special phenomenon, the failure of the oracles in the first century, we can, no doubt give some respectable account, though it would be too much to say that we can explain it fully. One great cause, no doubt, is to be sought in the extinction of separate nationalities, and the consequent absence of political life and activity under the Roman empire.

It is suggested in Plutarch's essay that the wickedness of mankind may be the chief and principal cause of this withdrawal of Divine direction. "There was no open vision," it is said in the 1st book of Samuel of a disorderly and anarchical time in the history of the Jews. But Plutarch cannot allow this explanation, as he thinks that it attributes unworthy feelings and emotions to the Divinity. Could it then be due, he asks, to the depopulated condition of the world, and of Greece

particularly, which he seems to have looked upon as one of the marked features of his age? The country districts of both Greece and Italy were, no doubt, from various causes, much less populous than they had been in former times. Population was aggregated into great cities, some of which, were probably crowded to a degree never before known. But the real cause of the failure of the oracles, Plutarch traces to a sort of temporary break-down in the supernatural machinery which regulates human affairs. The gifts of the gods to mankind are, he thinks, in their nature transitory; and it is, moreover, very hard to define how far the supreme providence extends, and whether it is strictly the cause and origin of all things. Many things, among them the oracles, may be left by the gods to subordinate beings, or demons, who themselves, from time to time, fail and perish, and are succeeded by others. This strange notion he confirms by a singular story of an occurrence which is said to have happened during the reign of the Emperor Tiberias, and to have been reported to him. A ship, on its way from Greece to Italy, was becalmed near the Echinades Islands, off the coast of Acarnania, and a voice was heard by the passengers calling on one Thamus by name, who, it appears, was an Egyptian sailor on board the vessel, but scarcely known to any one. To the third call he replied, "Here—I am the man." The voice then directed him, on the ship's arrival at a particular place, to make known that the great god Pan was dead. The passengers were much astonished and perplexed, and there was a warm discussion as to whether the voice should be obeyed or disregarded. Thamus made up his mind, in the event of a calm, to do as he was bid, and as the wind was perfectly still, and the sea smooth, on their reaching the place in question, he stood on the deck, and with his face towards the land, he exclaimed with a loud voice, "The great Pan is dead." Then followed a dismal noise of groaning and lamentation, which was heard by all the passengers, who on their arrival at Rome reported this marvellous incident.

This story is told by Plutarch in proof and illustration of his theory that the demons, or subordinate divinities, are themselves mortal,* and he thus suggests that the cessation of the oracles may be compared to that of music in the absence of the musician. This, however, is not all he has to say in explanation. He goes on to mix together theology and physical speculations in a strange compound. Although the earth is

* What are we to understand by the word *mortal*? Surely, subject to death. In spiritual language, by *death* is not *change of state* implied?—The casting off an old state and the entering into another? That spirits must die in this sense is quite comprehensible.

itself indestructible, yet its virtues and properties are liable to decay. Inspiration itself may be partly the result of physical or natural causes. The prophetic faculty, on which oracular responses depend, may remain dormant from never having been brought into contact with the proper object which can alone stimulate and call it out actively. Vapours and exhalations may thus have their part in producing the conditions under which oracles are given. Hence, any physical changes in the earth may conspire with the decay and failure of supernatural powers in bringing about this temporary failure of oracles." Mr. Brodribb observes, "We are here in a curious, perhaps a barren field of thought." To the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine* it might probably prove, on the contrary, a very fruitful field for study and speculation.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

THE NEW QUARTERLY MAGAZINE.

DR. SEXTON, in a recent lecture, makes the following reference to a silly article in the above Magazine:—

"A writer in the *New Quarterly Magazine* holds a mock *séance*, and imposes upon half-a-dozen of his friends and frightens a medium by his tricks. He has a hole in the ceiling of his room, out of which comes a leathern band to lift some one to the ceiling; a hole in the floor with machinery for raising the table; a hole in one of the walls to produce an illusion with a looking-glass, and so on. And we are to believe that when spiritual manifestations take place in our own homes, for example, all this preparation has been adopted by somebody to deceive us. Truly, this writer must think we are a set of fools. But who is he? No name is given, no address stated; some of the tricks described are simply impossible; in fact, the whole thing is probably as pure a piece of fiction as has ever been put upon paper."

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH ON MR. CROOKES.

The *Daily Telegraph* of January 13th, in a leader on Mr. Crookes and his testimony to "the phenomena called Spiritual," observes:—

"Mr. Crookes is a distinguished, if not an eminent man of science; his honesty is above doubt; and his courage in confessing to opinions associated in the minds of most thinkers

with rank imposture and sheer credulity is praiseworthy in itself. He is accustomed to observe facts, to draw conclusions; he is familiar with natural phenomena, and with the laws based upon them. Take him for all in all, he is a good witness. He now comes forward to tell us the result of four years' experiments, and in all sobriety and seriousness he records miracles—that is, astounding occurrences in defiance of 'the most firmly-rooted articles of scientific belief.' The 'miracles' occurred, for the most part, in his own house, surrounded by private friends, and in broad daylight."

TESTIMONY OF THE HON. WARREN CHASE.

We take the following from the report of a lecture by the Hon. Warren Chase, in the *New Church Independent* for November, 1873:—

"The materialization of spirit-forms is one of the triumphs of spirits in showing themselves to mortals. Only three weeks ago I saw at a house in the State of New York, two friends in the spirit-world—hand to hand and face to face, we met—not eighteen inches apart. I saw their faces as plainly and felt their hands as sensibly as if they had been in the flesh. One of these friends was William White, deceased, of the *Banner of Light*. If I ever saw him in my life, I saw him at this time. I could not be mistaken in that familiar face. I was not psychologized, I was not mesmerized, I was not biologized, or deceived by my senses in any manner whatever. I knew William White—I knew the pleasant gleam of his eye, and the old serene smile that played over his face. Nor was I alone in this recognition. A friend, sitting near me, exclaimed, 'Why, that's William White!' It would be vain for me to attempt to convey to you the strange sensation, the joy and the wonder that overwhelmed me, on seeing these spirit-friends. I was thrilled through and through, and have ever since been inexpressibly happy in the memory of that meeting. The sweet recollection of that hour dissipates my sorrow, and hangs about me like a halo of glory, while I reflect that I too, may soon be with them. It has brought to me a realizing sense of the spiritual world and its inhabitants which no power can take away."

VISION IN A DREAM.

The *Banner of Light*, November 15th, has a letter from Captain J. M. Hill, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in which among other manifestations through the mediumship of Mrs.

Margaret Sunderland Cooper, of Portsmouth, he relates the following:—

There appeared on a large mirror in the room where we were sitting a landscape view, in the centre of which was a beautiful lake, bordered with graceful trees; and what appeared to be numerous fairy boats, seemingly gliding over the surface, filled with men, women, and children of all ages. *This* picture remained on the glass during the evening, plainly visible to all in the room. Some of the company tried to rub it off with their handkerchiefs, but the labour was in vain. It did not vanish, I am told, until the next morning, when the elements of the phenomenon were seen to dissolve by one of the family.

THE SPIRIT-POST.

In a recent letter from Leghorn, Baron Kirkup writes:—

“ I have had a demonstration of letter-carrying by spirits more perfect than any of the former ones, of which there have been four or five. I myself wrote the letter alone in my room to a lady at Bologna, distance 110½ miles by railroad. The spirits Annina and Regina promised to take it and wait for an answer. It was a long one, very punctual, and on large paper. That and the two journeys—221 miles by railroad—were all accomplished in two hours and thirty-five minutes! The distance by straight line is less, of course; how much I do not know. The answer was thrown into my lap. I saw it in the air coming. The lady herself has since arrived from Bologna and confirmed what she wrote, and I knew her handwriting. She is the mother of Annina.”

A SPIRIT AND THE MEDIUM SEEN AT THE SAME TIME.

In the *Medium* of January 2, is an account of a private *séance* with Mr. Williams at the rooms of Prince Wittgenstein (aide-de-camp to the Emperor of Russia), in the Palace Hotel, Buckingham Gate, December 16th. After describing the room and its contents and surroundings, the report goes on to describe the appearance of a spirit in a turban and loose flowing robes, with swarthy countenance and curly black beard, holding in front of him a substance which suffused over the upper part of his figure a soft, luminous phosphoric-like flame of a bluish green tint, and so mellow that the eye could rest on it without discomfort. The writer then gives a description of this spirit-lamp, which corresponds with that quoted by us in a previous number; and he tells us the figure was lit up with great brightness, illuminating part of the room. He shook hands with the Prince and Dr. Boulland, and the writer; who says, “The hand was warmer than my own. As the hand was rather slowly reaching mine, I felt a slight sensation at the points of the fingers, as if a current of magnetism

was passing from me." In reply to the request to be allowed to see the medium at the same time, after some ineffectual attempts to throw his light where the medium could be seen, the Prince was invited by him to go to the screen behind which the medium was placed, and was entranced. "In a short time he returned, and told us he had seen Mr. Williams quite clearly, asleep on his chair, while John King stood over him, lighting up his figure with the lamp." The report is written by Mr. Webster Glynes, of 4, Gray's Inn Square, W.C., and to this is appended the following:—

"We declare the above to be a correct account of what took place in our presence.

"(Signed) E. B. BOULLAND, LL.D.

"GIUSEPPE PRESUTTO.

"I declare the above account to be correct. I saw the medium as stated, and John King holding a lamp over him.

"(Signed) PRINCE ÉMILE WITTGENSTEIN."

SPIRITUALISM IN INDIA.

The following paragraph is taken from the *Friend of India*, published at Serampore:—

The Bombay papers contain accounts of a mania for spirit-rapping which they say has set in among the natives there. If the statements are correct, it would not be surprising if the mania ran through India. Everything connected with the spirit-world is a profound mystery to the native of India. He has no definite ideas as to the future. He confesses at once that it may be this or that—he knows not what. A city with golden pavement astonishes him, but really the definiteness is what puzzles him. If spirit-rapping finds its way among such a people, we shall have queer revelations by-and-bye. They will intensify a hundred-fold all the mysteries, and will make a thousand more. Religion will not stand in the way in the slightest degree. A Hindoo is free to examine anything on the face of the earth, and speculate to his heart's content.

Mr. Peebles, in one of his recent letters of travel, published in the *Banner of Light*, writes of Peary Chand Mittra, a Calcutta commission merchant, writer and Spiritualist:—

"It can well be imagined that it gave me much pleasure to clasp the hand of this Hindoo thinker. He was for a time a writing medium; but at present his gifts pertain more to spiritual insight. He assured me that his ascended wife was as consciously present to him at times, as though in her body. Mohindro Saul Paul and Romanath Senx—two interesting young gentlemen connected with the higher castes—called upon us several times to converse of spiritual phenomena in America, and the best methods of holding private *séances*. Conversant with the spiritualistic literature of England, these young men are Spiritualists; and yet they have never

witnessed a shred of the phenomena. Shibchunder Deb—another devoted Spiritualist, introduced by P. C. Mittra—presented us a neat volume that he had recently published upon Spiritualism. It contains liberal extracts from American authors. This gentleman has also translated Emma Hardinge Britten's *Spiritual Commandments* into the Bengalese language, and they are now being circulated as a tract in India. We saw several Hindoo *healers* relieving the sick in the streets."

Captain Forsyth in his work on *Central India*, tells us:—

"Theirs—the *Bygas*—it is to hold converse with the world of spirits, who are everywhere present to the aborigines. Ghosts are supposed to be ever present, inciting to either good or evil. Many profess to see them. . . . These Bygas medicine men further possess the gift of throwing themselves into a trance, during which the afflatus of the Deity is supposed to be vouchsafed to them, communicating the secrets of the future. I am thoroughly convinced," says the Captain, "by evidence from other quarters, that this *trance* is not mere acting."

A SINGULAR CIRCUMSTANCE.

A singular circumstance occurred in connection with the death, a short time since, of the wife of Rev. J. V. Osterhout, of Webster. While she was sick with typhoid fever, her infant daughter, two months old, died, but the knowledge was kept from her. A few days before her death, she was observed looking up, as if she saw some object above her, and on being asked what she saw, replied, "I am looking at the baby, and she has died and you have not told me. There she is, right up there." After this she saw her several times and folded her to her arms.—*Boston Daily Journal*.

A MINISTER SAVES HIS LIFE BY HEARKENING TO—"THE DEVIL."

The following is taken from the *Ardrossan Herald*:—

"*Craigie—Witches and Spirits of Evil Genius.*

"The following is a curious instance of the prevailing belief of the period (some years before the Restoration):—
'Mr. Campbell, the minister, had frequently warned his hearers from hearkening to or believing in the local superstitions. He had been abroad preaching, and when riding home alone to his own house, he heard some one calling him by his name on the highway; and Mr. Campbell looked about, but saw nobody. This was repeated a second and third time. At the third time he said nothing, but heard a hideous laughter, and a voice saying, "The minister himself must now hearken to the devil!"

He rode on without any return. In a little he was called again by his name, which he did not notice, but rode on; then the spirit cried to him that he had better hearken to him, for he had a matter that very nearly concerned him to impart. Mr. Campbell still rode on, not seeming to mind what was said. The voice continued—"Well, believe me or not, it's time I tell you, and you ought to take heed of it! When you go home your wife is expecting you to supper; and there is a hen roasting at the fire for you; but do not taste it, for it is poisoned!" He rode home, and when he entered his house he saw a hen roasting. He was then in much perplexity, and asked his wife where she had the hen? She told him the beast was brought in dead, though warm, and sold by a woman under a very ill fame for witchcraft. He went to prayer, and asked light from God. He was in great strait, betwixt a just care for his own health, and taking a warning from an evil spirit. However, at supper he cut up the hen, which looked well, and was no way discoloured, which made him inclined to eat her. Just at that instance a little dog came into the room, and it struck him in the mind to try an experiment on the dog; and he cast a piece of the hen to the dog, which had no sooner eaten it but he swelled and died! This cleared his way, and he ate none of the hen. "There are some evil spirits," very sagely says Wodrow, "that when permitted, seem to delight in freaks; and yet it seems this evil spirit has been forced to tell Mr. Campbell his hasard, and used as an instrument for preserving this good man. The fact is sufficiently vouched, and may be depended on."—*Note in Stat. Account.*

Correspondence.

AN ANSWER TO MR. HOWITT'S LETTER ON THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

23rd December, 1873.

SIR,—Mr. Howitt has made his letter to Mr. Everitt public property in sending it to you for publication. Everything written by so old and tried a worker in the cause of Spiritualism must needs have great weight with all candid Spiritualists. His anathema is, therefore, eminently calculated to do the Association serious injury, if left unanswered.

I therefore crave space in your pages for a few words on the other side, unless some abler pen than mine have forestalled me.

Mr. Howitt argues that because Spiritualism has, without the aid of associations, or combinations, or human struggles, progressed in a manner which has excited his "increasing wonder"—because "this spiritual force has (he considers) not failed" in any way—because its expansion and diffusion have been unparalleled—therefore associations and combinations are unnecessary, and incapable of "adding to its operations the elements of a more decided success"—

that, because its progress has been the work of the "Great Invisible Spirit"—because it has triumphed thus far, "not by favour, by human care or plans, by human aid or wisdom, but in direct opposition to all the forces and intellectual subtleties of humanity," and in spite of "sneers and malice," therefore "it is clear that it is a divine element which no hand but that of its Creator can wield," and it were impious for man to meddle with it—at least, as "conductors," or in the way of associations to promote the study or the spread of it. Surely, Sir, such arguments need not to be answered, but only to be stripped of those stately folds of rich and florid rhetoric in which Mr. Howitt knows so well how to clothe his ideas, and to be stated in their naked simplicity! Or, if they need any answer, this should suffice, *viz.*, "All history proves" that it ever pleases God to work out his ends by human means. The very successes of Spiritualism which Mr. Howitt so much exults in, are no exception to this rule: "human care and plans, human aid and wisdom, the forces and intellectual subtleties of humanity," *have* been elements which have contributed to those successes, by God's will and grace, though they may have been arrayed at the same time on the other side as well. And though the triumphs of Spiritualism hitherto may have been unparalleled, we may yet hope that, if we do not neglect it, its triumphs hereafter may surpass the former. The plan and objects of the Association differ rather in scope than in kind from those which have hitherto been pursued by the earnest disciples of Spiritualism, and their principles remain the same.

Mr. Howitt asks whether the Association aspires to "protect," &c., "this evidently divine afflatus?" Not exactly; (there is a slight touch of sarcasm in the use of the word "protect" here, and of the other expressions in this paragraph). It humbly hopes to aid in cherishing, fostering, and diffusing this divine gift, and, if necessary, to "protect" Spiritualists.

He asks, "Can you add fresh wings to the wind? fresh impulse to the tides of ocean? fresh speed and brilliancy to the light?" No; but we can utilize the wind, the tides, and the light. We can divert, concentrate, or diffuse these "sublime elements" to advantage, nor is it, in the present day, generally considered sacrilegious to do so. Mr. H. "can only follow with admiration and thankfulness to God the career of glorious energy and victory of development of Spiritualism." If he had always been content merely to stand thus idly gazing up into heaven, I much doubt whether Spiritualism would have spread so much as it already has done in this country. Steam is a wonderful thing, and no less a gift of God than Spiritualism is; but if James Watt had contented himself with staring at the kettle, and wondering, we should not have been much the better for it. Even now, in taking the trouble to write this letter, Mr. Howitt belies his own theory.

He says that combination is unnecessary to Spiritualism, because this latter has shown no sign of decadence or defect, and because history proves that combination leads to disintegration, and he instances Judaism, Christianity, and Protestantism. Is it not perhaps rather true that the disintegration began first, through human frailty, and that the combinations were attempts, partly unsuccessful (owing also to the human element of error) to stay the process of decay? And may we not hope that the Association will profit to some extent by the lesson of these partial failures of the past? As to there being yet no sign of decadence or defect, is it not true that Spiritualists in this country are already to some extent split up into factions, more or less at open war with one another, one of them, perhaps the largest, eminently autocratic in its constitution, the self-constituted leader of which does much injury to the cause of free Spiritualism, by the unscrupulous and tyrannical use he makes of the almost complete monopoly which he usurps of spiritual patronage, and of the diffusion of that modicum of spiritual truth and knowledge which he allows to circulate; and daily shows signs of becoming more intolerant, more bitterly hostile to those Spiritualists who are not of his way of thinking, and who decline to bow down before the molten image which he has set up? The Association humbly hopes to do something towards healing these sores, by affording a common ground of union on the broadest Spiritual basis—a common centre of action where all may meet, free from extraneous influences, and learn to know one another better, and therefore to love one another better, and to co-operate for the general good. Bickerings there may be no doubt, and heartburnings, perhaps not a few

quarrels, for we are human; but these evils will exist, not because association is wrong, but because men are fallible, and it may, I think, be doubted whether they will not be moderated rather than aggravated by our attempts at union. Else it were better we should each of us hide his light under a bushel altogether, and confine himself for ever in his separate hermit cell.

Mr. Howitt pleads that our Association will hereafter fall into the hands of selfish men, who will use it as a means of ruling. No doubt this is a great danger, and one which, guard against it as we may, we shall probably not be able wholly to avoid: we can only try to do so as much as possible; and, as I have already said, there seems no good reason for supposing that the Association is likely to induce any worse usurpations, tyranny or monopolies than exist already, but rather the reverse. Has this danger not yet arisen? Has no selfish man yet used Spiritualism as a means of gratifying his vanity and ambition? From such the Association would fain rescue it, so far as may be possible.

Mr. Howitt asks whether the Association proposes to establish itself by the "authority of an election by every individual independent Spiritualist in the kingdom?" Surely! Why not? *All* may join. *All* may vote at the general meetings. There are no tests—no qualification, except an annual subscription of five shillings, which if we succeed as we hope to do, may possibly be reduced hereafter, or done away with.

Mr. Howitt "solemnly protests against any such design" as the formation of an Association, because "those who do not approve of such a public machinery will dissent and oppose." No doubt if there were many Spiritualists as dogmatic and obstructive as your correspondent, we should have stormy times of it, and probably fulfil his prophecy of utter failure: but we hope far better things. And he has already urged that Spiritualism thrives under opposition—that it has "lived on poisons." By his own showing then, our "Pandora's box" ought to do Spiritualism good service.

He thanks God that he has "lived in the glorious time of the persecution and contempt of this Church of the latter ages." He does well. God forbid I should deny that sweet are the uses of adversity; but that fact does not justify voluntary penance, or submitting to persecutions which may *legitimately* be avoided. The genuine martyr, such as he has been, may well glory in his tribulations, and he is indeed to be envied and revered. But he would be a fanatic, and no genuine martyr, who should insist on being burnt at the stake, or on his friends being burnt, when it might be avoided by a little combination, provided it did not entail a sacrifice of principle. Mr. Howitt maintains that it does entail such a sacrifice, but the burden of proof rests with him, and I humbly submit that he has not borne it out successfully. Moreover, all of us are not made of the iron fibre, or gifted with the same amount of noble powers of self-denial which distinguish him. What of the many thousand fearful ones who, yearning in secret isolation for sympathy and spiritual food, dare not go out to seek it in face of the opposition and ready ridicule which surround them, and so pine and eat their hearts in silence, till kind death releases them, or perhaps suffer moral deterioration from this starvation? In the former case—nay, doubtless even in the latter—such discipline may be for their ultimate benefit, but is it for *us* to inflict it? Are *we* to constitute ourselves the scourges of the Almighty? For, by holding aloof we do inflict these sufferings on our weaker brethren. Would not this Association be to such a strong wall of defence, a grateful source of encouragement, an ark of refuge, a firm ground whereon to cast the anchor of their hope, a well of consolation?

Mr. Howitt allows *local* associations. Before we can avail ourselves of this permission we should know what number of Spiritualists may constitute, or how many square miles may be covered by a local association? For he advances no argument, nor can I conceive any, applicable against a central association which would not be equally applicable against a local association in a greater or less degree, nor any work that could be done by the latter, whether in the way of the "conduct of schools, or of lectures" or what not, in which a central association might not be of the greatest assistance to the local ones. Such at least is one great object of the central association, another is to promote the formation of such local associations.

Mr. Howitt asserts that "at present Spiritualism the world over, stands free and independent." Query. "No man or set of men can claim any right to say 'Do this,' or 'Do it not.'" I know not about the *right*, but certain I am that some men do say "Do this," or "Do it not," and say it pretty strongly and peremptorily, too.

Summarily and finally, "If it be true that Spiritualism has maintained and disseminated itself infinitely beyond what all human powers could have done," is (so far as I understand the sentence) not a fair way of putting the matter, because the Association does not profess to supplant the Almighty, but only to try to carry out His purposes as His humble but willing and thankful instruments. The point which Mr. Howitt had to prove was rather that Spiritualism has maintained itself infinitely more than it would have done if there had been any combination of human powers to assist it. I deny that he has proved his premiss, as he was bound to do, but granting the premiss (as put by me), I deny the conclusion that the Association is therefore *now* "unnecessary and uncalled for." It may have been unnecessary hitherto, but the time may have come when it has become necessary. "If it be true," which, I submit, he has also failed to prove, "that the dissensions of all great spiritual bodies have sprung out of the attempts to incorporate them," it would not necessarily follow that the Association would be wholly "mischievous," but only that it would be subject to certain evils inseparable from everything human, but which we maintain would be over-balanced by the good, and would probably be less than the evils already existing. "If it be true that Spiritualism has always been free and universal as the air we breathe, then to enclose it in partial boundaries and with partial cognomen is to strip it of its glory." No doubt; but the Association does not enclose *Spiritualism*, or give it a partial cognomen. The Association itself is limited to the United Kingdom, for the present, because that affords it as wide an area as it can conveniently compass in the present state of things. Mr. Howitt condemns it as being too broad and comprehensive, and again, almost in the same breath, as being too narrow and exclusive.

I am sure, however, that he has written his letter in the most perfect good faith and with the best intentions, which I believe to be the case with all his actions, and that his concluding prayer for our enlightenment is sincere. I therefore heartily thank him for the one, and earnestly reciprocate the other.

I am not authorized in any way, formally or informally, to speak for the Association, or for any one but myself, but I know that I am not alone in the sentiments I have expressed.

A. J.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—I hear that my friend, Mr. Newton Crosland, has made a reply to my letter on the subject of a National Association of Spiritualists. I have not seen it, the Magazine having failed to reach me this month. That, however, is of no consequence, as I have no intention of disputing the matter with him or any one else. "What I have written, I have written;" and time will only too surely verify my statements—if history be history, and not fable. No age has been wanting in those who would

Gild the refined gold, and paint the rose,
And add fresh fragrance to the violet.

In face of the argumentative genius of Englishmen, words might be accumulated to any extent; we must refer this question to *facts*. If the National Associationists wish to disprove the arguments of my letter, they have only two things to do—avoid the evils which have beset all such associations on psychologic or religious subjects, and show practically that they can extend and prosper Spiritualism better than it has been extended and prospered without them. Till then I remain incredulous; and till then, I remain their and your friend and fellow-servant,

WILLIAM HOWITT.

COMMUNICATION FROM ALLAN KARDEC.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—I beg to forward you a translation of a communication recently received from Allan Kardec, founder of Spiritualism in France, by Dr. C. B. Boulland, LL.D., reporter to the *Révue Spirite*, No. 7, Rue de Lille, Paris.

WEBSTER GLYNES.

"Repeat to our English brother Spiritualists that greater unanimity should prevail amongst them. A warfare of words soon breeds real discord. They should bear in mind that the narrow-minded and ungenerous are ever ready to take advantage of differences of opinion upon matters even of no real importance, to stir up hatred among God's children, and to estrange them from one another.

"Remember me to Mr. Morse, to Mrs. Tappan, whom I much admire, to Mr. Williams and to Miss Cook, and also to the English editors and writers on Spiritualism; for yourself accept from me in spirit a cordial grasp of the hand.

"ALLAN KARDEC."

HYMNS FOR THE SPIRITUAL CHURCH.

SOUL CONVERSE.

THE chair is vacant on the hearth,
The gracious form has gone from sight
Whose presence was a guiding light
Illumining our daily path.

We know by loss how great his worth;
The gentle voice in counsel wise,
The love that trembled in the eyes,
We never more shall meet on earth.

Nor ever grasp the friendly hand,
Nor ever see the kindly face,
Nor e'er with mortal vision trace
His footsteps in the Silent Land.

But sometimes mystic gleams there are
Which pierce the spirit's inner sense,
And notes of high intelligence
Like distant music, faint and far,

Are wafted from the spirit-shore:
And then we feel a presence near,
And hear again the voice so dear,
And doubt is gone for evermore.

And on the spirit there is left
A strength which none may understand:
We wait with hope the Better Land,
And walk the world of fear bereft. T. S.